

Chair Report

August 2018

Summer is supposed to be a time when we relax and enjoy what we have. In some ways, this summer has been that for me. However, at Northern Lights, summer is also when we begin the budget discussions; trying to forecast what we need for next year, and trying to predict what the Province will do to support Libraries! In today's world, forecasting what we need for next year is the "easiest" part of the budget; trying to guess what the province is going to do to support Libraries is the tough part.

During the summer, I have had some discussions with the chair of the Lac La Biche Library about the concerns outlined in their letter. The fact that Lac La Biche Library felt they had to send in a letter to outline their concerns, highlights why Northern Lights needs to move to a regional focus. Our municipal partners, and our Library partners, need to know what is happening at Northern Lights. By meeting with our partners, I hope to be able to uncover some of these issues while they are still small, and easier to resolve.

I believe the budget committee has come up with a good budget. One wild card, as always, is trying to guess what the province is going to do to support Libraries. This year, we have another wild card thrown into the mix; northern lights should be spending some money on the building. Any time you do a renovation, the hard part is where you stop. Often, you stop when you run out of money! Northern Lights has renovated the building twice already, and each time the work has stopped because there is no more money. The building committee, and the executive, determining what has to be done, and we will be going to the Public Libraries Branch to see if we can get some support from the Province.

We all have a voice. But when we speak as individuals, our voice gets lost. When we speak with one voice as a region, our voice gets much louder. When we speak as one voice across the province, our voice gets louder still. It doesn't mean we stop competing, but it does mean we work with each other, so we all do better.